

## **Notes about CAPA - California Alternate Performance Assessment**

### **What is CAPA?**

- Task-based assessment produced by Educational Testing Service (ETS).
- Includes performance indicators to look for while the learner completes each task.

### **Who takes the CAPA?**

- Learners with significant disabilities who cannot take the regular assessment with accommodations and/or modifications, or whose IEP team has determined a curriculum that specifies a functional focus.

### **Why should instructors use Stages to prepare for CAPA?**

- Stages is not a substitute for, but rather complements CAPA.
- Stages covers the California alternate content standards, which are a subset of the general standards.
- Stages provides opportunities for the IEP team to benchmark learner progress between CAPA administrations.
- Stages provides information about the learner's ideal assessment environment and access needs before CAPA.
- Stages minimizes change in routine for students: Stages helps the learner and instructor become more accustomed to observation and prompted tasks, so that CAPA can provide a more accurate "snapshot" of learner skills.
- Stages activity format is similar to the CAPA task format:
  1. repeated verbal prompting at a set frequency
  2. unobtrusive timing
  3. positive reinforcement model

### **How can instructors use Stages to prepare for CAPA?**

1. Periodically present learners with activities in Mathematics, Reading, and Writing throughout the year.
2. Set prompt timing to 5 seconds in preferences.
3. Adjust the input method preferences to minimize barriers to learner responses.
4. Use the Observation Forms to note learner behavioral responses and become more attuned to important information to gather.
5. Occasionally use video cameras and/or additional observers to record learner performance during activities.
6. Compare regular observation forms and activity reports to identify areas of strength and/or improvement.
7. Use the knowledge of identified growth areas to design classroom activities and/or choose appropriate software.
8. Use the resulting, regularly gathered information about learner progress to update Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives.

**Comparison of Formats:  
CAPA Level 1 Practice Task from “Training Partner” Activity  
and a sample Stages Activity**

|  |                       |                       |                                     |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Level 1  | English-Language Arts | Reading Comprehension | Follow 1-step written instructions. |
| Identify a picture/object/word cue.  |                       |                       |                                     |
| <i>Place a pencil, and piece of paper on surface, from left to right, in that order. [Give verbal prompt:] Show me the paper. Pause [5 seconds] for response. [Give verbal prompt:] Show me the pencil. Pause [5 seconds] for response. If the student's responses to the different prompts vary, assign the highest score based on the best response to any of the given tasks.</i> |                       |                       |                                     |
| (5) Completes task without prompts.<br>(4) Completes task with one verbal or gestural prompt.<br>(3) Completes task with one physical or modeled prompt.<br>(2) Attempts task.<br>(1) Orients to task<br>NR No response  |                       |                       |                                     |
|  |                       |                       | Score: _____                        |

(Source: Training materials for CAPA field test, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed/capa/index.htm>)

*Typical Stages Activity format*

|  |
|--|
| <b>Stage Three:    Object identification: Toys - Crayon</b>  |
| The learner is presented with a crayon.<br>A voiceover says, “ <b>This is the crayon.</b> ”<br>The learner is then shown a screen with a crayon and a jar of bubbles.<br>The verbal prompt says, “ <b>Show me the crayon.</b> ” Text on the screen and Mayer-Johnson picture communication library symbols for “Show” and “Crayon” reinforce the verbal prompt.<br>If the learner selects the incorrect item, the voiceover says, “ <b>You showed me the bubbles. Show me the crayon.</b> ” If the learner selects the crayon, the computer provides an animated reward. |
| The computer records the learner’s performance accuracy, time on task, prompt timing, number of prompts presented and other data for later reference.  |